

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
A.L.P.In reply, please quote  
No. 1493/54All communications to be addressed to the  
Secretary  
When sending or calling  
with reference, letter please ask forCHILD WELFARE DEPARTMENT  
508 HAY STREET, PERTH.

No. Young

21st April, 1955.

AIR MAIL.The Secretary,  
Department of Immigration,  
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

Dear Sir,

Your Reference No. 133/3/13.

I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant regarding the provision of case histories of child migrants, as dealt with in paras. 17-19 of the John Moss Report.

I also wish to thank you for forwarding copies of correspondence from London on this point.

In connection with your inquiry as to the proposals formulated in this State for the screening of migrant children by government officials, this is a subject which has been under consideration for some time. In the past there have been complaints about the physical and mental standards of children who have arrived under the Child Migration Scheme and therefore, in order to have some basic knowledge of the children immediately following their arrival here, it is now proposed that they be tested by a team of doctors, dentists and psychologists to ascertain their physical and mental standards from the very commencement of their sojourn in this State.

Arrangements have been completed and the various custodian authorities have been advised that these examinations will be carried out in the institutions within one month of the arrival of migrant children in future and I am glad to say that each organisation has welcomed this scheme. Undoubtedly it will be of value to all concerned, particularly the children and will enable the custodian and guardian authorities to understand the type of child and to put right any physical defects which may become apparent following the initial examinations.

A copy of my letter to one of the custodian authorities is attached so that you will see how each was advised of this new development.

Yours faithfully,

Encl.

  
SECRETARY.

133/3/13

Copy and 133/3/13 (Adm)



C O P Y.

CHILD WELFARE DEPARTMENT,  
508 Hay Street, Perth.  
31st March, 1955.

The Director,  
Catholic Episcopal Migration  
and Welfare Association,  
81 St. George's Terrace,  
PERTH.

Dear Father Depiazzi,

For some time past this Department has felt that newly-arrived migrant children should be thoroughly examined by doctors, dentists, opticians and psychologists to ascertain whether or not each child requires any attention and also to learn particulars of the child's mental capabilities.

It is considered that by making an early testing of each new child on arrival, an opportunity will be given to carry out any treatment required and will also be of benefit to the custodian authorities and ourselves to know the type of child received.

If these test checks reveal that a child was not really a suitable subject for immigration purposes, a report will then be sent on to the Department of Immigration, Canberra and that Department in turn will no doubt communicate with the appropriate authority in the country from which the child came. This will undoubtedly have the effect of further children being more effectively screened before they are selected to emigrate to this State.

The Hon. Premier, who is also Minister for Child Welfare, has approved of the Department's recommendation along the lines set out above and arrangements will be made so that children arriving in Western Australia under the Child Migration Scheme will in future be tested in the institutions within one month of the date of their arrival.

I am sure you will agree that this arrangement will be of benefit to all concerned and the Department feels certain that it will receive your organisation's co-operation in the carrying out of these tests when the professional persons, whose services have been secured by this Department, visit your Homes.

Yours faithfully,

  
SECRETARY.